RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

JANUARY, 1879.

COMING UP FOR HONOURS.

Scholars' Prizes.

For twenty-five consecutive years the Committee of the Ragged School Union have awarded prizes to the youths of both sexes, who, having been scholars in Ragged Schools, have become servants with good character. In every case it was a *sine quâ non* that the situation should be held, without any change, for a period of not less than twelve months. The object of this absolute condition was twofold:—

1. To enable the employer to form a correct estimate of the character of the servant.

2. To discourage in the servant a love of change, or the tendency to give up a good situation because of some pique or difficulty that ought to be overcome.

A servant having remained in one situation at least twelve months, and then vacating it, is not disqualified from taking the prize, provided he or she is in another place within a fortnight. In this case certificates of character must be furnished by both employers. But, should a second change take place before the time for awarding the prize, the prize is forfeited for that year. To allow boys or girls to change as often as they see fit, to leave at any caprice of temper, or even for some apparent benefit, there would be no subjection of the will nor effort to give satisfaction, and no right formation of character.

This formation of character is, then, the main object of these prizes, and, this being the principal object, there must be a standard of rules laid down, and so expressed that every scholar about to become a servant may fully understand them, and by them decide for themselves their right to claim the prize.* While, on the one hand, it is desired that this system of awarding prizes may act as a stimulant to exertion and care, vigilance must be exercised that the rules laid down be strictly adhered to,

* CONDITIONS FOR 1878.

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.

2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.

3. Having kept one situation for twelve months, ending in 1878, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the prize, provided they are in the second place December 31st, 1878. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.

4. For the first year the prize shall consist of seven shillings and sixpence and a card, provided the Committee of the School recommending pay two shillings and sixpence of it.

5. Those who have received a money prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a prize card, and a book in value of not less than two shillings and sixpence.

6. They must have been in regular attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to female domestic servants.

7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, girls working in jute, cartridge, and similar factories, or earning more than ten shillings per week, are not eligible for the prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1878.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from this application unless all the questions be definitely answered and the certificates fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 15th, 1879.

The prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the Committee of the School may determine.

JOSEPH G. GENT, *Secretary.*

1, Exeter Hall, December, 1878.

lest the prizes become too common or too easily obtained, thus, as it were, producing neither good nor harm. We rather think, if good be not effected by, in some degree, forming character, a baneful influence must follow, by lowering the importance of the object contemplated. The rules are therefore carried out in their entirety, and so well is this known, that the decision of the umpire has scarcely, if at all, been appealed against. There have been efforts made to get some particular rule set aside to favour some special case; but instead of complying, it has been suggested that the merits of such cases should be met by the School and not by the Union, thus keeping the rules of the Union intact.

These prizes were first suggested by Mr. Snape in the year 1853, and at the close of that year 144 prizes were fairly claimed and awarded. The last award was to Christmas, 1877, when the number of prizes was 570. The number of prizes for the twenty-five years have been carefully collated, and grouping them in periods of five years each, the following is the result. The number of prizes distributed in each of the five years was, ending Christmas:—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1857 ..	1,101 ..	634 ..	1,735
1862 ..	2,580 ..	1,634 ..	4,214
1867 ..	1,327 ..	1,495 ..	2,822
1872 ..	1,761 ..	1,972 ..	3,733
1877 ..	1,267 ..	1,534 ..	2,801
	8,036	7,269	15,305

The disparity in the numbers between boys and girls in the first two periods arose from a condition to award the prizes to those girls only who were domestic servants, and those only of them who slept at their employers' houses. The boys not being subject to such a rule enabled them to succeed where the girls wholly failed. There was, however, one rule made binding on the boys, and

which was made imperative, viz., regular attendance at their Sunday Schools. It was seen that girls in domestic service could not comply with such a rule, and therefore it was not made binding on them.

It may also be noticed that in the second period the numbers were much higher than in any other, which was caused by very exceptional circumstances, that applied only to two years in that period. Those exceptional circumstances then passed away, and the numbers, before and since, have kept a very fair equilibrium. There have been slight fluctuations, but no more than could be accounted for by the briskness and slackness of trade. In this respect the numbers, as collated for twenty-five years, form a kind of trade barometer.

It has been asked, What is the proportion between those who have succeeded in taking the prizes and those who have entered service? We have tried to collect the information from the schools that would enable us to answer this important and interesting question, but we have not had the full success we desired. Some of the schools, where the teachers were painstaking and methodical, supplied the information definitely from their books, and which, as far as it went, was remarkably uniform. For instance, from one school 70 children had gone into places of various kinds, 7 of whom had taken the prizes; from another 52 had gone to work, of whom 4 took prizes; a third had sent out 98, of whom 10 received the prizes; while from a fourth 67 had taken situations, of whom 5 successfully claimed the reward. From these four schools as many as 287 had gone into places, of whom 26 took the prizes, or 1 in 11 of the whole number. We have no reason to think these four schools were more successful in getting work for their scholars than the others; but their teachers, or managers, had been more careful to note down what had been done,

and were therefore in a position to report upon it. These friends, however, stated that many other of their scholars had got into situations without the help of the teachers, and some after they had ceased to attend the school, of whom they could give no report. If these be an equivalent—and they are very far more than an equivalent—for those who took the prizes after the first awarded to them, we may fairly multiply the 15,305 prizes by 11 to get at an approximate number of children that had by their schools been fitted and aided to enter upon the duties of life for self-support. That number reaches the grand total of 168,355.

When we take into consideration those who by the rules were not considered eligible to compete for the prizes, we have reason to conclude that this number, large as it is, is very far short of the whole. That number has, by some, been estimated at from 200,000 to 250,000. A teacher writing to the editor on this subject says, "I have been struck by the small number of senior scholars who claim the prize of 7s. 6d. and certificate of character. I cannot but think that some of our friends, by not looking up candidates, are neglecting to confer what is of incalculable benefit, not only to the children, but to our Ragged Schools generally."

It cannot be said that these young people entered the market with skilled labour or with a "*finished* education," but, to a very large extent, they did take with them sharpened wits, quick observation, and a readiness to adapt themselves to new circumstances. Mrs. Chisholm reported that the boys from the London Ragged Schools that had emigrated to Australia made far better shepherds than those who had gone from the Lincolnshire sheep-folds; and gave as a reason, that the London boys knew nothing of the work, and had to learn many details as practised in the new country, and, being naturally quick,

soon adapted themselves to the satisfaction of their employers—so much so, that some of the sheep-owners sent home pressing *orders* for more of the boys from the London Ragged Schools. "Give us," said they, "more of Lord Shaftesbury's boys, for they make capital shepherds in this country." The boys from Lincolnshire and other sheep-rearing districts took with them their own notions from the old country of the best way to tend sheep, but these not squaring with those of the new country, they had much to unlearn, and giving up their old notions with a bad grace made them the less acceptable and useful.

We could furnish much testimony given by the employers expressive of satisfaction at the conduct of their servants, but one only must suffice on this occasion. His teacher said of him, "I have known him for eight years, and found him one of the most troublesome lads I ever had to do with." The teacher went on with his work of training and teaching till the lad went into a situation, and when he had held it nearly two years the master wrote, "I certify that the lad has been twenty-two months in my employ, and during that time he has been a very honest boy." The lad found another place, and after he had been in it a considerable time the employer wrote, "We like the boy very much, and he suits us well. He came as an errand-boy, but we have promoted him to a clerk; and if he behaves himself he has a capital opportunity of getting on in the world." The teacher watched over his scholar in both his places, and rejoiced to see the lad that had been so troublesome in the class becoming so trustworthy in his situations. The teacher, when scanning the lad's character and progress, says, "Surely we can only attribute such results to the subtle yet powerful influence of the school, and rejoice over such as 'fruit after many days.'"

The certificate of character at first was a plain small card ordinarily printed; the next step was a card with embossed bordering, and the lettering in the centre was dusted with bronze powder. Gradually the card was enlarged and embellished with a design, at first only in black and white. Then our friend Mr. Sulmon, a ragged-school teacher, introduced colour, and with good effect. Then Charles Montague, who had taken a prize in the second year of distribution, and having served his apprenticeship as designer and lithographer, and for years been the Superintendent of the King Edward Ragged Schools, turned his attention to the Certificate Card, with a view to make it increasingly valuable and attractive. For some years past the prize cards have been designed and lithographed in several colours by him, and have been greatly valued by those to whom it has been awarded. In very many cases it has been framed and glazed to decorate the wall of the room at home. We had almost decided to give a facsimile in *colours* of the last certificate as a frontispiece to our new volume, but the expense made us hesitate. We have, however, been able to furnish a wood-cut of it on page 9. Of course this, being in black and white, has but a poor effect compared with the original, printed in six colours.

A friend, writing to us on the value of these certificates, says: "That the certificate is invaluable as a character, and will pave the way to the most trustworthy spheres, cannot be doubted. But what is of the highest importance is the consolidation of our work, the retention of our senior scholars, following up past impressions, guiding them at a critical time, urging them to a decision for Christ, keeping them from their old haunts, preparing them for, and ultimately fixing them as teachers; and this the system of scholars' prizes is accomplishing in a very large degree."

On the first distribution of these prizes Lord Shaftesbury said to the recipients of them, "This card, although a very simple thing in itself, will be very honourable to the possessor. You know that in some of the higher ranks of life the fancies of people are very much tickled by stars, and by ribbons and by garters. They like them exceedingly, and they look very well when they have them on, and no doubt they are objects of considerable honour and reward to those who have laboured well in their vocation and done good to their country. Depend upon it, however, that this card in its degree is just as honourable to you as the diamond is to a person in any station of life whatever. You will have done your duty in your station of life, and depend upon it, if you were to become the greatest man or woman the State ever knew, you cannot go beyond that point of honour—to the close of your lives, having done your duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you."

Our frontispiece shows the interior of Exeter Hall on the occasion of the distribution of the prizes. Lord Shaftesbury is represented in the act of delivering the prizes in bulk to Sir R. W. Carden as the President of the Ogle Mews School.

While thus writing our attention was drawn to an article in "Social Notes," entitled "*Our Lost Children*," which seems to stand in strange contrast with our experience on the subject of helping children to make a fair start in life. On looking over our own paper, and reading the one in "Social Notes," we could not help thinking there was some analogy of them with a pair of instructive pictures often seen, in one of which a donkey with a couple of boys astride it is going at its fastest pace after a bunch of carrots held by the foremost boy at the end of a stick in front of the donkey's nose. In the other the two boys are trying to force the donkey to go against its will,

PRESENTED BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE
RAGGED SCHOOL UNION
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
RAGGED SCHOOL.
THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY K.G.
PRESIDENT
TOGETHER WITH A PRIZE
OF SEVEN SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE
FOR HAVING RETAINED A SITUATION WITH GOOD CHARACTER
FROM THE EMPLOYER MONTHS ENDING CHRISTMAS. 1873.
Shaftesbury President.
Joseph G. Gent Secretary.

THE SCHOLAR'S PRIZE CARD

one by means of a stick, the other by pushing the hind quarter of the creature. A little ingenuity, common-sense, and the cost of a bunch of carrots, made all the difference between the two pictures. The main portion of the article we refer to in "Social Notes" we give in the next paper.

"OUR LOST CHILDREN."

(REFERRED TO IN PRECEDING PAPER.)

FREQUENTLY the last known record of the girls sent to service from our workhouse schools is, "Run away!" Occasionally these waifs reappear after a few months, or years, as utterly reprobate characters, in the strong room of a workhouse, a disgrace and curse to society—lost children to the State! What becomes of those never heard of again we can only surmise.

Admirable societies, such as the Metropolitan Association and the Girls' Friendly Society, are doing what they can to help and save these friendless ones by visiting them at the places to which they go from the schools. If the *intention* of the societies could be carried out it would do all that might be desired, but at present, having only the *sanction* of the workhouse authorities, there are difficulties in the way of its usefulness. The mistresses, especially in the lower class, where the need for supervision is the greatest, frequently resent inquiry about the girls. It is in these places that one gets the door slammed-to with, "Oh! she's run away, and I neither know nor care where she is." Think what such domestic service must appear to these poor little drudges, only fourteen years old! when seen through a seemingly endless vista of scrubbing brush, blacklead, and general muddle! She is sent from the school, where *everything is necessarily*

arranged on a large scale, with lifts, washing machines, meals prepared, and all coming to hand without her knowing or caring how. She goes into a house with unknown carpets to be swept, enigmas of dusting to be performed, crockery to wash, which seems to tumble of itself from her clumsy fingers, washing to be accomplished by unaccustomed labour, on her poor tired feet from early morning till late night, with perhaps some small children to look after in addition to her work. Of course all goes wrong. The mistress cannot understand how a girl of her age, who, trained in a home, would naturally know common domestic duties, can be so incapable, and sets down to obstinacy what is really stupid bewilderment. Added to her ignorance is frequently hereditary tendency to moral evil, and the blunted sensibilities and affections which being brought up amongst a crowd entail, with which the mistress has to contend. While the daughters of the home after their naughty fits of wilfulness, idleness, and stubbornness, get kissed and forgiven—mamma excusingly saying, "They are only children"—poor little Cinderella is hardening in her sullen moods at constant reproof and the tedium of labour, at once puzzling and hateful. There is no Sunday afternoon's visit home to "tell mother" and get comfort, or the promise of a change of place; so at last, in desperation, either on her own account or enticed by some disreputable chance acquaintance, she escapes from her trouble (as she thinks) by running away. Alas! poor little lost girl! One friend who would have looked at her view of the circumstances might have saved her. At some of the workhouse schools the chaplain visits the girls till they are eighteen years of age. Though, as he goes by parochial authority, he receives more courteous treatment than the uncredentialled lady, his visits are useless so far as the interests of the girl are concerned. He stops as long as time allows to listen to the mistress's

account of the shortcomings of the girl, who is summoned only to receive a pastoral lecture in the presence of her mistress, but is never allowed to express her feelings.

At present the lady visitor's task is a most unthankful one. She has to introduce herself, possibly on the door-step, to a busy woman who knows nothing of ladies' societies, and does not desire any interference with her little drudge. The girl herself is seldom seen, and if she is summoned she has such a general pervading smuttiness and sloppiness and hurry about her that the interview is of no use, carried on as it usually is in the passage or at the street-door. What should be done is, that when the *friendless* girls leave the school, official parochial supervision should extend till, say, the age of eighteen. A notification from the parish should be sent to each mistress that the lady visitor has the authority that a girl's relatives would have, to see her at certain times, and to have her to spend a day once a month, also to ensure her attending some place of worship on Sunday. If a plan were organised by which these friendless children might be efficiently befriended, how many might be saved to become the glory instead of the shame of their country! —*Social Notes.*

OUR WORK IN LONDON:

Its Increase, Extent, and Crisis.

In the last number of our *Quarterly Record* a leading article appeared on "Our Work in London," showing its increase, its extent, and the financial condition of the Parent Society. That article was carefully considered by the Committee, who decided to reprint it for wider circulation, with a view to putting the Society's finances into a more satisfactory condition. The article stated that in the three years of 1875-6, 1876-7, and 1877-8 the

Committee of the Ragged School Union had voted, as grants in aid of the Schools, not only the entire amount received as donations, subscriptions, collections, and special contributions, but also, in addition, a sum of £2,167 4s. 2d., besides having to sustain all the charges consequent on conducting a Central Society. The subject also came under the careful notice of the President, the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., who kindly consented to issue a circular letter to accompany the reprint of the appeal. That circular letter was as follows:—

Ragged School Union, 1, Exeter Hall, Strand.
London, W.C., December, 1878.

Sir,—Allow me to commend to your attention and sympathy the accompanying statement, which details the work conducted, for the benefit of the poorest and most degraded of our population, through the agency of the Ragged School Union.

The need for Ragged Schools is shown therein to be still very great. Their usefulness is demonstrated by their success. The zeal and devotion of 2,600 voluntary teachers in their self-imposed work are beyond all praise. Many, nevertheless, of the schools are kept open only through the liberal grants made to them by the Parent Committee.

It is with much concern I find that this work of benevolence and mercy is put in peril by the yearly falling-off of subscriptions, so that the expenditure for the last three years has exceeded the income by a sum but little short of £2,200.

For nearly thirty-five years this Society has exercised, through God's blessing, a vast influence for good in the thickest, most wretched, and neglected portions of this great metropolis, and multitudes of children have been rescued from infamy and crime, large numbers of whom are now occupying positions of respectability and usefulness. Not a few of them are engaged in endeavouring to rescue their still neglected brethren from the sin and degradation into which they themselves had fallen.

A long and intimate acquaintance with the work carried on by the Committee justifies me in assuring you that any contributions you may entrust to their care will be wisely dispensed for the good of the children on whose behalf I now venture to sign this appeal.

Subscriptions and post-office orders may be sent to Mr. Joseph G. Gent, Ragged School Union, Exeter Hall, London.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Shaftesbury.

THE NATIONAL REFUGES FOR HOMELESS AND DESTITUTE CHILDREN, AND TRAINING SHIPS,

FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE ST. GILES'S RAGGED SCHOOLS.

DURING the last half-century, more than in any previous period of England's history, more earnest efforts for the amelioration of the condition of the poor, and for the spread of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ among the lowest and the poorest of the great city of London, have been made. It is very gratifying, and a cause for great thankfulness, that many of these efforts have taken deep root in the minds and hearts of the well-to-do and thinking portion of our country; so much so that they may be now reckoned among the great Institutions for which England is famed. Among those efforts may be mentioned the Ragged School movement, which commenced some forty years ago. This movement, which began in a very small way, and was looked upon with anything but favour at first, has been one of the efforts which God has signally blessed to the benefit of more than a quarter of a million of the poorest children that could be found in the country.

These pages have chronicled from time to time the rise, the progress, and the Christian efforts of the varied schools affiliated with the Ragged School Union. In this way it has been our pleasing duty from time to time to give an account of several of the schools, and what has been accomplished through the instrumentality of their respective committees and teachers; for instance, we have referred to the Ogle Mews School, and all the machinery put into operation in that district, which may be looked upon as in the West. Not long since, we gave an account of the operations of the committee of the King Edward Ragged School, and all the additions, in the way of Refuges and Industrial Schools, they have added to their original work. A similar account has been given of the Field Lane Ragged School, and all their auxiliary efforts to educate among the poor and needy of that district, including Night Refuges and Certified Schools. We have also, as our readers will remember, recorded what has been done in the Southern part of London; and it is now our pleasing duty to refer to the West-central part of this city, and to give a short sketch of the rise, progress, and results of what was formerly called the St. Giles's Ragged School, but now better known as the National Refuges for Homeless and Destitute Children, and Training Ships Chichester and Arethusa. The work of this committee began in the month of April, 1843, in what was then known as the "Rookery" of

St. Giles's. Page after page might be filled with details of the condition of the people who lived in this "Rookery," but our space will not allow; suffice it to say that the work began under these circumstances:

A number of Christian working men who were associated with the congregation of St. John's, Bedford Row (of which the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel was the minister, and while he was yet a clergyman of the Established Church of England), were anxious to do something for their Lord and Master, and they formed themselves into a little society, called the "Tash Street Working Men's Association," for the purpose of assisting the London City Mission; their object and desire being to raise sufficient funds to wholly or partly support a missionary in connection with that society. Their efforts were crowned with success, and they succeeded in getting a missionary appointed to the "Rookery" of St. Giles's, whose name was Morrison. This devout man, when he entered upon this degraded and unpromising field of labour, was appalled beyond description at the degradation into which the people had sunk. He seemed very soon to come to the conclusion that it was hopeless to strive to raise the adult persons of the district, and so the whole force and bent of his mind was fixed upon raising, as far as God enabled him, the children of the place. He looked about for some time, and at last succeeded in hiring a loft over a cowshed, which was then in Streatham Street, in the very centre of this St. Giles's "Rookery."

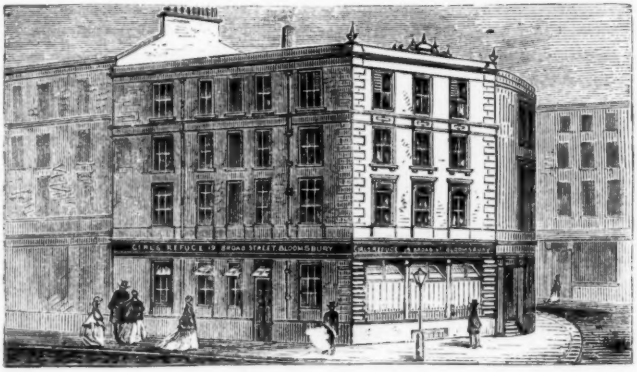
It was in this hayloft over the cowshed that a meeting was held in April, 1844, to consider the question of rendering help to Ragged Schools, and forming new ones where needed. That meeting was adjourned to May 24th, when the late Rev. John Branch presided. At this meeting Mr. Starey moved, and Mr. Santo seconded, a resolution, which was carried, "That Ragged Schools for affording gratuitous instruction to children of the poor, who have no other means of learning to read the Word of God, are deserving the support of Christians of every denomination." A Central Committee was then appointed, to consist of two delegates from each school. In July, 1844, the name of this new Society was settled as THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

This loft was fitted up, and the earnest and devoted missionary succeeded at last in opening the room on Sunday nights in which to gather the children for instruction. He was aided and assisted by the working men before alluded to, and the Hon. and Rev. Montague Villiers, who was then Rector of St. George, Bloomsbury, and the congregation of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, took a warm interest in this timely effort to get at the children of the degraded class in the "Rookery." The effort of the missionary and the labours of the

teachers were crowned with much success, and ultimately the room was opened other evenings in the week besides Sunday, and the school grew in numbers and usefulness year by year. The superintendent of this early effort was Mr. William Williams, who has been ever since one of the leaders of this effort, and is still the Secretary of "The National Refuges for Homeless and Destitute Children, and Training Ships Chichester and Arethusa."

In 1848 another Ragged School was commenced in Neal's Yard, Seven Dials. About the same period another in Abbey Place, Bloomsbury. These last-named schools were soon filled, like the one in the "Rookery," by the very poorest of children.

On the completion of the new street through St. Giles's, now known as New Oxford Street, a great change came over the locality of the



19, Broad Street, Bloomsbury.
In this House 200 children of the Ragged Class are receiving gratuitous instruction, and between 30 and 40 working lads live and board here.

"Rookery;" a large number of the worst houses were pulled down, and light and air began to penetrate into this dark spot of London. It was then found desirable to build model lodging-houses for the people. The company who built these houses purchased the cowshed and stable-yard where the first little school was commenced, and the committee had to vacate their hayloft and seek for other premises where they could carry on their operations.

They ultimately bought a freehold house, situated at 19, Broad Street, St. Giles's, and here they removed the operations of the Ragged School from Streatham Street, and in due time the work at Neal's Yard emerged into the same building. This new house in Broad Street was opened in July, 1852. A public meeting was held at St. Martin's

Hall, at which the Earl of Shaftesbury presided, with a view of furthering the interests of the schools, and in the hope of raising funds to enable the committee to take into the same building a few of the most destitute children, who needed more than instruction, because they were utterly friendless, and therefore required a home and training if they were ever to become useful in their day and generation. This was the origin of what is called the National Refuges for Homeless and Destitute Children.

For the want of funds only nine boys and girls were at first received into the Refuge by the committee.

This branch of the work so rapidly gained the sympathy of Christian people that funds came in for the support of the children, so that the committee were greatly encouraged to prosecute this important branch.

GIRLS' REFUGE, EALING, W.

In this Home upwards of 100 Girls are being educated, fed, lodged, clothed, and trained for domestic service.

There was no lack of children who stood in need of the Refuge, and year by year the numbers increased, so that at length it was found impracticable to carry on the work of education and training boys and girls in the one house. The boys were therefore removed, in 1855, to a temporary Home in Arthur Street, St. Giles's, and in 1858 larger premises at 8, Great Queen Street, were taken on lease by the committee and fitted up entirely for the boys.

The girls were now left at No. 19, Broad Street, and this branch, like that for the boys, gradually increased, through the benevolence of the Christian public enabling the committee to add to their numbers,

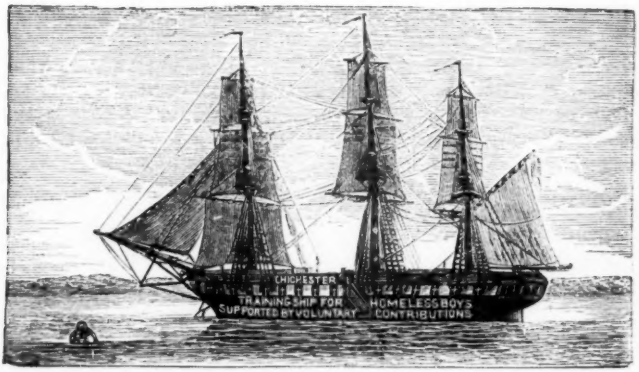
so that in the year 1860 it was deemed advisable to take another Home for girls at Acton, about five miles from London.

Here the girls were received as well as at Broad Street, and ultimately this branch Home was removed to Ealing, where it has been carried on since the year 1867, and at the present time there are upwards of one hundred girls in the Home receiving a sound religious instruction and training in all the duties of domestic life. Notwithstanding this extension and the continuance of the Home in Broad Street, the accommodation was too limited for the number of girls and their proper training; the committee therefore purchased a large mansion at Sudbury, to which some of the girls were removed, and thirty or forty added to their number. Here this Home is being vigorously carried on for the benefit of destitute girls.

GIRLS' REFUGE, SUDBURY, NEAR HARROW.
In this Home upwards of 100 Girls are being educated, fed, lodged, clothed, and trained for domestic service.

We have said that the boys at last found a settled home in Great Queen Street in 1858. In that year the work of the Refuges began to attract a larger circle of benevolent friends, so that the committee were very soon enabled to add about forty additional inmates to the twenty they took to that building, so increasing the number to sixty. The work gradually increased and grew in importance and usefulness, but yet there was a large class of boys still on the streets, finding a living as best they could, sleeping in casual wards and other nightly shelters, and which to some extent was without the pale of the operations of the committee, as they neither had funds to take in a large number of them or the machinery to grapple with elder boys such as they were.

In the early part of the year 1866 some very graphic and astounding letters appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* written by a well-known gentleman, who, with a view of calling attention to the condition of those who found their way to the casual wards of the workhouse, went and applied and gained admission for himself that he might be an eye-witness of what transpired within those walls. The account he gave seemed to electrify all who read it, and the committee of the Refuges were anxious, as far as lay in their power, to rescue the juvenile casual described in those letters. There was some difficulty in ascertaining what would be the wisest course to pursue to reach these wandering lads, when, happily, the novel, and which proved to be the successful, one was adopted after consultation with the Earl of Shaftesbury, namely, that these lads should be invited to a hot supper of roast beef



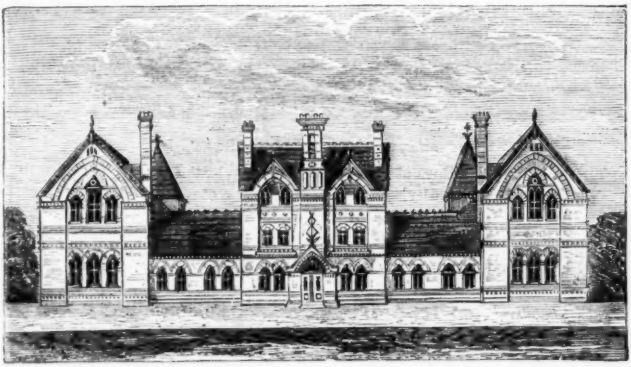
200 Boys are educated, supported, and trained on this Ship for the Mercantile Service and the Royal Navy.

and plum-pudding. They came in large numbers — nearly three hundred. His lordship and other friends were present, and the scene will never be forgotten by those who looked upon it. The boys greatly enjoyed their supper, and seemed to be filled with astonishment that they should have been gathered together for such a meal as that. After supper they were assembled in the large upper room of the Refuge, and here the noble Earl addressed the youthful band in a tenderly and fatherly manner, and as all present were anxious to rescue as far as possible these and thousands of others like them, Lord Shaftesbury asked the lads, if a training-ship could be established on the Thames, how many of them would like to embrace the opportunity of going on board to be trained as young sailors! All hands were held up, which satisfied his lordship and others present, that

if these poor waifs and strays had but a chance to escape the life they were living, they might well be made useful men. A few days after this supper between forty and fifty of these lads were received into the Home, and they filled almost every available bed.

No time was lost in applying to the Government for the loan of a ship, and in due time the Chichester was granted, which was fitted up and inaugurated as a training-ship for homeless and destitute boys in the month of December, 1866.

The candidates for admission to the Boys' Refuge and Training Ship increased in greater ratio than the applicants for admission to the Homes for girls; so much so that in year 1868 it became necessary to open a school for younger boys at Bisley, in Surrey, and in 1872 a



BOYS' COUNTRY HOME, BISLEY, SURREY.

In connection with this Building there are 100 Acres of Land. The Boys are educated, clothed, fed, lodged, and trained to look after cows and pigs, grow vegetables, and follow other industrial pursuits. 143 Boys are at this Home.

second school in the same village was also added to the list of Homes under the care of the committee, and named after the noble President of these Institutions.

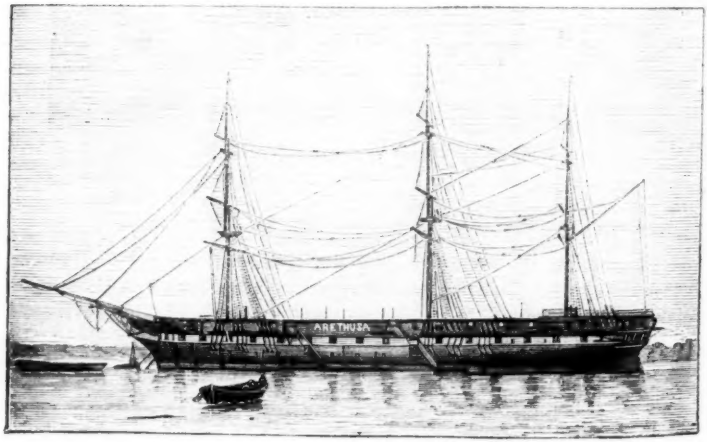
The work on board the Training Ship became so extensive and successful that it was deemed advisable that a second Training Ship should be established, because the demand for sailor lads at that time, and for a few years previous, was greater than the supply. The committee therefore, in the year 1874, with £5,000 nobly contributed by the Baroness Burdett Coutts, established the Arethusa training-ship for the reception of three hundred boys.

With the two Homes for girls at Ealing and Sudbury, the two schools for younger boys at Bisley, the two Training Ships in the

River Thames, and the old Refuge and Receiving-house in Great Queen Street, it was thought that the work of the committee was complete, and that they would be able to prosecute their labours year after year

SHAFTESBURY SCHOOL, BISLEY.

There are now 140 Boys at this Home, being educated and trained to earn their own living, the same as in the other Home.



This Ship is intended to receive 300 Boys, but only 200 are now on board for the want of funds.

without having to add another Home to their list. But in the year 1876 the old premises in Great Queen Street showed unmistakable

signs of dilapidation and decay, and being composed chiefly of wood (except the outer walls), the committee and friends who knew the house began to be alarmed lest an accident by fire or giving way of some of the structure might endanger the lives of the 150 boys who were under the care of the masters and teachers there. It was therefore resolved that as soon as funds permitted, the dilapidated building should be pulled down and a new Home erected upon the site. A special appeal was made for funds to enable the committee to construct the new building on the site of the Old Refuge, which was so far successful that the committee at the beginning of the last year resolved to commence the work. They had arranged with the ground-landlord. The plans were also prepared and approved, and builders' estimates

BOYS' HOME, FORTESCUE HOUSE, TWICKENHAM.

were obtained for the work. Difficulties, however, arose with the owners of property adjoining, respecting ancient lights and the height of the proposed New Refuge; and it seemed probable, from the report of an independent architect, who was consulted on behalf of the committee on all the objections raised by the owners of other property, and the numerous intricacies connected with party-walls, ancient lights, and interference with light and air of the occupiers of adjoining houses, that the committee, if they proceeded with the new building as proposed, would be involved in several Chancery suits entailing no end of trouble, delay, expense, and annoyance. After duly considering this report the committee came to the conclusion that it would be most unwise to involve themselves and the charity in the responsibility of legal proceedings, and therefore, with the greatest

reluctance, they determined to abandon the scheme for rebuilding the New Home for Boys.

Just at this time the Committee had offered to them Fortescue House, Twickenham, with four acres of land, recently occupied by the Metropolitan Police Orphanage. This property was inspected by the committee and their surveyor and considered admirably adapted, with some alterations, for the Boys' Home. Negotiations were entered into, and ultimately it was agreed to purchase the property, consisting of a very large old-fashioned mansion, with schoolroom, dining-hall, playground, and numerous outbuildings, 2½ acres of freehold land, and 1½ of copyhold land. The purchase money for the whole property was £6,300, which is considered very cheap.

The repairs, alterations, and additions made by the committee to meet the requirements of the operations now to be carried on here, cost about £1,300. The whole cost therefore will be about £7,600.

Towards this sum the committee received £3,991 3s. 6d. in special donations to the fund for rebuilding the premises in Great Queen Street, so that nearly £4,000 was required to free the premises from debt.

The committee feel sure the subscribers will acquiesce in the purchase of Fortescue House, instead of rebuilding in Great Queen Street, because the charity will be saved about £9,000.

Boys' Refuge, 25, Great Queen Street.

To secure the land in Great Queen Street free from rent would have cost about £7,000; and the estimate for rebuilding the premises was £9,000.

The committee have therefore given up the old premises, and taken a smaller house at No. 25, Great Queen Street, Holborn. This will now be the London Home for the reception of Homeless and

Destitute Boys who apply for admission. They will be kept here until their cases are inquired into, and then transferred to the Training Ships or the Homes at Bisley or Twickenham as vacancies occur.

The number of boys and girls received into the Refuges since their establishment is 7,248, and the number left for service is more than 6,000, leaving more than 1,000 inmates in the Homes and Ships.

KING EDWARD RAGGED SCHOOLS.

On Tuesday afternoon, November 19th last, the memorial stone of the new wing of the above schools, which are situated in King Edward Street, Mile End New Town, was laid by the treasurer, Mr. H. R. Williams. The chair was occupied by the Rev. William Tyler, and there were also present on the platform the Rev. R. C. Billing (rector of Spitalfields), Rev. John Thomas, B.A., Mr. Curtis (of the Ragged School Union), and the Rev. Mr. Schnadhorst. Prayer having been offered by the Rev. J. Thomas, the secretary, Mr. Charles Montague, read the report, which, after remarking upon the improvement of the condition of the people during the past forty years, stated that the East End of London had shared in the general benefits secured in a very marked degree. The efforts of Bible societies, Sunday schools, the Christian Instruction Society, the Ragged School and Mission, had all aided very considerably in producing fruits which now rejoiced the hearts of thoughtful and benevolent men. Thirty-two years ago the present Earl of Shaftesbury inaugurated the King Edward Ragged Schools, and among the institutions which had grown out of that inauguration, and that still remained identified with it, were the noble buildings known as the King Edward Industrial Schools, with 210 inmates. The statistics of the Ragged School Union showed that there were 434 children on the books; that the average attendance throughout the year had been 276; and that the number of voluntary teachers was 75. The Week-night School had 120 scholars on the books, with an average attendance of 51. From the Parents' Library upwards of 10,000 exchanges of books were made during the year, which had been had chiefly through the liberality of the Religious Tract Society and Sunday School Union; £27 worth of new books had been added to the Scholars' Library at a cost of £10 17s. 6d. On the 10th July about 400 children and friends were taken to Bushey Park; and at Christmas the children had their usual treat. For a long time past the accommodation offered in the free church, which had been turned into a schoolroom, had been insufficient for the children anxious to gain admission on Sunday evenings, and, after due consideration, a contract

had been entered into for the building of four classrooms. To provide accommodation, the classroom (formerly an old stable) had been pulled down, together with an adjoining cottage; and now two other adjacent cottages were found to be in a dilapidated condition, and must also be removed. The contract for the classrooms was £859, but the total outlay would be near £1,500. Of this, about £1,000 had been guaranteed or was in hand; thus leaving about £500 still to be raised. The report concluded by stating that in consideration of the assistance, pecuniary or otherwise, that the committee had received from Mr. H. R. Williams, on no one could the favour of laying the foundation stone rest so suitably.

Mr. H. R. Williams said he had hoped that the further portion of the land belonging to the trustees of this building was to be devoted to the moral and spiritual benefit of the adult poor in the neighbourhood, and not to the mere building of cottages which were not wanted. He hoped Mr. Tyler would use his influence with the committee in favour of that class for whom they had done very little for the last thirty years. He rejoiced, however, for what had been done for the juvenile portion of the population, the results of which had been marvellous. There were 210 inmates in the certified Industrial Schools, who had to be fed, clothed, and taught, and to be fitted for important positions in life, and he knew no better thing than to take these children from the streets and to train them to habits of order and industry and religion. It was not, however, the trustees or the committee who were doing the work, but those teachers who, not only on Sundays but upon weekdays, gave their time and attention to this admirable work. He announced that the teachers had collected the large amount of £50 towards the enlargement of the building; and the Rev. Mr. Tyler also informed the meeting that Mr. Williams had made an offering of £50 towards the same good object.

The ceremony was then performed by Mr. Williams, and suitable addresses were delivered by the Rev. Robert Billing, rector of Spitalfields, and others.

BIBLE TEACHING.

Mr. F. Peek and the Religious Tract Society having arranged a plan for awarding prizes to the pupil-teachers and senior scholars in the Board Schools of the School Board for London, held the third annual distribution in July last. The Chairman of the Board, Sir Charles Reed, presided, when he stated that "the Act of Parliament left School Boards free to give or to withhold Bible teaching; but it was provided that if any religious instruction were given it must be

absolutely undenominational. The School Board for London resolved at once that in their schools the Bible should be read daily, accompanied by such explanations as were suited to the capacity of the children. From 1871 to the present time, in every department of each school, this rule had been carried out; texts of Scripture had been committed to memory, and usually simple hymns were sung, and prayer offered with the children by the responsible teacher. The attendance was voluntary, but practically universal; for in 680 departments, with 188,000 in average attendance, not one child in 4,000 (exclusive of Jews) had been withdrawn, and no single complaint had been made by any parent. The gross number of children in Standards 1, 2, 3, examined last year, was 70,063; in 4, 5, 6, it was 10,453, while the pupil-teachers numbered 1,546. This year the numbers had risen to 81,000, 24,000, and 2,000 respectively; thus giving a total of 105,000 as against 82,000 in the preceding year. This examination had been based upon a syllabus of instruction issued by the Board, and had been carried out by the Board's own inspectors. He would not attempt to describe the plan adopted; but whether by the *viva voce* examination of the younger children, or the written papers of those in the upper standards, the results fully supported the conclusion that the regulations were honestly complied with. This year, he would add, there was great improvement in three particulars—in the spelling, the relevancy of the answers, and the sound moral tone pervading the whole."

SYSTEMATIC BIBLE TEACHING.

The *Monthly Record* of the Free Church of Scotland publishes the following extract from Mr. Ruskin's works:—

"How much I owe to my mother for having so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make me grasp them, and, above all, taught me to reverence them as transcending all thought, and adorning all conduct. This she effected, not by her own sayings or personal authority, but simply by compelling me read the Book thoroughly for myself. As soon as I was able to read with fluency, she began a course of Bible work with me, which never ceased till I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses with me, watching at first every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse. It might be beyond me altogether; that she did not care about, but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end. In this way she began with the first verse of Genesis, and went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse—hard names, numbers, Levitical law, and all; and began

again at Genesis next day. If a name were hard, the better the exercise in pronunciation; if a chapter were tiresome, the better the lesson in patience; if distasteful, the better the lesson in faith that there was some use in its being so outspoken. After our chapters (from two to three a day, according to their length, the first thing after breakfast, and no interruption from servants allowed—none from any visitors, who either joined in the reading or had to stay upstairs—and none from any visitings or excursions, except real travelling) I had to learn a few verses by heart, or repeat, to make sure I had not lost something of what was already known; and with the chapters above enumerated I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scottish Paraphrases, which are good, melodious, and forceful verse, and to which, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound.

"It is strange that, of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive—the One Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm—has now become of all the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the law of God."

THE PARENT AUTHORISED AS A TEACHER.

LATE in November the magistrate at Clerkenwell Police-court settled a case of some importance—that of a parent qualified to teach, to be allowed to instruct his own children. Mr. Weston answered to a summons, taken out by Mr. Saunders, the Superintendent of the Finsbury division of the London School Board, for not sending his son, aged seven years, to school. Mr. Saunders put in the usual statement as to the nonattendance of the child. The defendant stated that he preferred to teach his son himself. He was a tutor himself, and had passed the examinations of the London University. Previously he had sent the child to the Board School, but he found that there he became acquainted with bad companions, and in consequence he decided to teach him at home. Mr. Saunders stated that the defendant was travelling tutor, and could not spare time during the day to teach his son. The defendant said that the officer who came to him told him that he knew he could not afford to spare the time. He was not out all day, and it was absurd to suppose that a child of seven could study all day. Mr. Barstow said that up to that time he had been under the impression that the child was nine years old, but there was really no reason, he thought, why a qualified person should not teach his own

child if he thought fit. The case would be dismissed. After the defendant had left the court, Mr. Barstow pointed out to Mr. Saunders that it was not necessary that a child should be taught during the day. The Education Act only required that the child should receive a certain amount of education. If he thought fit, the defendant in the case might have taught his son at five o'clock in the morning, if the time suited him.

ORCHARD STREET FREE SCHOOL.

FOUNDED IN 1811.

Before Vice-Chancellor Sir CHARLES HALL.

THIS was a petition by the trustees of a charity called the "Orchard Street Schools, Hackney," upon the hearing of which rather an interesting question was raised. It appeared that a charity, formerly known as the "Hackney Free School" (since amalgamated with the Orchard Street School), was founded about the year 1811 by a Mr. William Pearson, who, by a deed executed in that year, conveyed to trustees (now represented by the petitioners) a piece of land and school-house in Well Street, Hackney (being the school in question) upon trust to permit part of the premises to be used as a master's residence, and to permit the schoolroom to be used "for the gratuitous education" of the boys elected as scholars, "and for no other purpose," and directed that the trustees should use their best endeavours to keep up the number of the scholars to 60, at least without taking any compensation for their education, and observing that no other religious principles should be taught there except such as were in accordance with "the doctrinal articles of the Church of England in a Calvinistic sense, and with the Assembly's catechism;" and in case the school should be reduced to 30, or under that number, and should so continue for two years, or, from want of funds to support the same, or otherwise, should be discontinued or rendered incapable of taking effect for two years, then the trustees should convey the school property and pay all accumulations of its rents to the British and Foreign Bible Society, to be used and applied towards the objects of that society. About the year 1820, the then governing body of the school introduced the system of charging a small fee of 1d. or 2d. a week to each scholar; and in the year 1868 a scheme was settled by the Charity Commissioners for the administration of the school, whereby among other things the payment of a small weekly sum by each scholar was sanctioned. In 1873 the trustees of the charity leased the school property to the School

Board for London, who in 1877 became the purchasers of it, under the powers conferred upon them by the Elementary Education Act, and paid the purchase-money, now represented by the sum of £2,126 19s. 9d. Consols, into court. The British and Foreign Bible Society now contended that the gift over in their favour contained in the deed of 1811 had taken effect, upon the ground that the intention of the founder of the charity was that the scholars should receive a perfectly gratuitous education, and that the acceptance of payments, however small, from the scholars from the year 1820 downwards caused a forfeiture; that the society, not having known how the school was being administered, were not barred by the lapse of time; but, if they were, that a fresh forfeiture was occasioned under the provisions of the scheme of 1868; or, at any rate, that the charity had been, by the operation of the London School Board, rendered incapable of taking effect, and had come to an end accordingly, entitling the Bible Society to a transfer of the fund. The object of the present petition was to have the respective rights of the petitioners and the Bible Society in the fund in court ascertained and declared; and, in the event of the petitioners being held entitled, to have a scheme for the regulation and management of the fund, and of the other endowments of the charity, which consisted of two sums of £398 13s. 6d. and £1,203 Consols, settled by the Judge, and such funds dealt with according to the provisions of such scheme.

Mr. W. Pearson, Q.C., and Mr. Heath appeared in support of the petition; Mr. W. F. Robinson, Q.C., argued the case on behalf of the Bible Society; and Mr. A. R. Kirby appeared for the School Board for London.

The Vice-Chancellor said that, assuming, in favour of the British and Foreign Bible Society, that the taking of payments which commenced about 1820 was a cesser of gratuitous education, and a variance of the terms of the trust deed such as to cause a forfeiture by the governing body of this charity, the right of the society who claimed under the forfeiture arose upon the occurrence of the forfeiture, and had consequently now been barred by lapse of time. For it was clear upon the authorities that the statute was applicable to charitable claimants. Then, as regarded the second alleged forfeiture, it did not appear to his lordship that a variation in the amount and mode of an existing payment could have the effect of creating a new forfeiture. This was an answer to both those objections; while as regarded the taking of the School by the School Board, the Elementary Education Act was never meant to destroy any existing charity, or to give operation to any gift over which, but for the passing of the Act, would not have taken effect, and accordingly that statute provided for the reinvestment of the

purchase-money of property taken under its powers for the purposes for which such property was originally intended. The Vice-Chancellor saw no reason to doubt that a scheme could be framed by the trustees which would carry into effect the original objects of this charitable trust; but if this should turn out to be impossible, then, but in no other case, the gift over in favour of the Bible Society would arise.

CHILDREN'S DINNERS.

To the Editor of the Quarterly Record.

SIR,—We shall feel deeply obliged if you will kindly grant us space for this urgent appeal for funds to enable us to carry on the present work of feeding some 8,000 poor children weekly with a good meat dinner, each child paying a sum not exceeding one penny for its dinner. During the past year we gave in this way 141,085 such dinners, being 12,365 more than in the preceding year, while the working expenses were a trifle less instead of greater. In consequence of the numerous urgent appeals from all quarters we opened our dining-rooms some three weeks since, and have now exhausted our funds entirely, so that without large and immediate assistance our work must be crippled and contracted, whereas the applications for the dinners and for dining-rooms in fresh districts are largely increased. Though the demands on the liberality of the public have been so large and so varied of late, yet we trust and believe that means will be given sufficient to enable us to carry on this truly necessary and interesting work of improving the health of the wretched and half-starved juveniles who throng the streets of the poorer districts throughout this metropolis.

Subscriptions thankfully received by the Treasurers, the Lord Kinnaird, 1, Pall Mall East, and Wm. Fuller, Esq., 111, Piccadilly; or may be paid in to their account with Messrs. Ransom, Bouverie, and Co., 1, Pall Mall East; and also to the Secretary, Major Cooper Gardiner, 38, Gloucester Street, Warwick Square, S.W.

We are, Sir, your obedient servants,

SHAFTESBURY,
EBURY,
KINNAIRD,
A. P. STANLEY,
WILLIAM FULLER,
} Treasurers.

November 23.

Charity can and does take many shapes, each excellent after its kind. But the institution in behalf of which Lord Shaftesbury and

his fellow-labourers to-day solicit the assistance of our readers has this cardinal point in its favour, that the good it does is tangible and immediate. London children of the class from which the London Ragged Schools are recruited are naturally vigorous and healthy, else they most certainly would never have outlived the untoward conditions of their infancy. If the London arab does not die while still a child in arms, it must be blessed with lungs of exceptional power, and a constitution singularly proof against neglect and disease. As soon as it can toddle it is turned out into the streets, and there it plays, on the pavement or in the gutter, from morning to night. The air of London is not, as is commonly supposed, unwholesome, and London children, were they properly fed and were their homes decent, would be fully as sturdy and vigorous as the young of our peasant population. Good food, kindness, and strict discipline, are a magic in themselves; and of these, for the not so much underfed as half-starved little London vagabond of the gutter, good food, if not first in ultimate importance, most certainly stands first of all in order of immediate necessity.

The Society cannot each day give a dinner to every Ragged School pupil in the metropolis. It accordingly makes it a rule to give but one dinner a week to each applicant. There is no better established fact in dietetics than that for a growing child one good meal of meat in each week is the necessary *minimum* of nitrogenous food. For six days the children of the poor, who, being almost always in the open air, are always hungry, bread and potatoes, and rice, with perhaps a little milk or some scraps of animal food, are sufficient to support health, strength, and growth, provided that on the seventh day there is a liberal allowance of meat.

Were the Society's funds larger it could give a dinner a week to every Ragged School child in London. Were they larger still, it could supplement each dinner of solid meat by an additional and subsidiary meal of suet pudding. There is no more prompt or sagacious form of benevolence than that which picks the arab from the gutter, and if she be a girl turns her out an honest, happy woman; or, if he be a boy, makes of him a smart, skilled workman, whether tinker, tailor, soldier, or—best of all—sailor. Here, at any rate, we have a solid return for our money. There is no nobler work than the reclamation of human nature, and, strangely enough, there is none more practical. The Ragged Schools do in London much what is done on the River by the Boys' Refuge and the Marine Society. But its work needs assistance of a more strictly material kind.

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN ENGLAND.

The Right Hon. W. E. Forster, speaking at Keighley early in November, laid down the chief heads of our educational needs in England thus: (1) Good schools of the elementary class—*i.e.*, for children who must go to work, if possible, by thirteen, and who ought first to be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic well, and also to have their minds so opened and interested in their lessons, as to give them a taste for further knowledge; (2) good secondary schools, for those children whose parents can afford to keep them at school till sixteen—*i.e.*, schools in which they should be taught French and German, obtain a taste for literature, and have the chance of special preparation for some of the professions; (3) good evening classes, for young people who are at work in the day, and who do not wish to drop their education; (4) a higher kind of teaching—collegiate teaching—in the larger centres of population, for those who care to seek it; and (5) a system of scholarships by which the children who acquit themselves best in any one kind of school should be able to win their way to schools on a higher level. In addition to this, Mr. Forster advocated the compulsory inspection of all endowed secondary schools; facility for the inspection, if desired, of all other secondary schools; and a system of certificates of capacity to teach, which should be required from all candidates for the post of teacher in an endowed school, though not (as yet, at least) in any other secondary school.

THE FATHERLESS BOY: A CASE FOR REEDHAM.

Votes for Edmund J. Belcher Wanted.

To the Editor of the Quarterly Record.

Dear Sir,—Some short time since one of our earnest voluntary workers passed away, his widow being left. With three children depending on her industry for their support, it occurred to me that something might be done for one of the children, a boy of eight years. After conference with some friends it was resolved to secure, if possible, his admission into the Reedham Asylum for Fatherless Children. This was greatly facilitated by the kind offer of H. R. Williams, Esq., to pay the expense of cards and postage. The hearts of the subscribers to this charity will be moved to help this cause when I tell them that the father of this child caught typhoid fever during one of his visits to the homes of the poor, which so under-

mined his constitution as to render a subsequent illness mortal. The following card has been widely circulated:—

JANUARY ELECTION—1879.

The Asylum for Fatherless Children, Reedham.

TO THE GOVERNORS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

The favour of your VOTES and INTEREST is earnestly solicited at the ensuing Election, in behalf of

EDMUND J. BELCHER,

AGED 8 YEARS,

Who is left Fatherless. Three children dependent on the Mother. Father was a Clerk. His leisure hours were given to works of benevolence. He was an active and earnest Ragged School Teacher, and for several years he filled the office of Honorary Secretary to Plough Court Ragged School.

The Case is strongly recommended by—

*H. R. WILLIAMS, Esq., Oak Lodge, Highgate, N.
HENRY SPICER, Esq., Aberdeen Park, N.
*W. M. COOK, Esq., M.D., 3, Lee Place, Upper Clapton.
*J. G. GENT, Esq., Ragged School Union, 1, Exeter Hall, London.
*JAMES DIX, Esq., Harman Villa, Wood Lane, Highgate, N.
Mr. NEWZAM, Upper Street, Islington, N.

*Those marked thus * will gladly receive Proxies.*

The Votes of all friends to Ragged Schools are earnestly solicited.

I remain, Dear Sir, yours truly,

R. J. CURTIS.

[The Editor well remembers friend Belcher in the energetic efforts he put forth in the Shoe Lane Ragged School, and afterwards in the one opened in Plough Court. It will be a source of great pleasure to him to receive for the admission of this orphan boy to the Reedham Asylum any votes the subscribers can spare. Please address them to Joseph G. Gent, 1, Exeter Hall, W.C. To do so will make the *widow's* heart sing for joy, and render real help to the *fatherless* (Job xxix. 12, 13).

INSTITUTES FOR RAGGED BOYS.

THE need for these institutes has been amply proved by the way in which those now open have been appreciated by the class of boys for whom they are intended. The thousands of boys to be seen in the streets of every large city, ill-clad, half-fed, and unwashed, to the sight of whom our eyes, by constant use, have become accustomed, and our hearts almost hardened, have virtually no home to which to go on leaving their daily work, should they have any, but, in most cases, merely a corner of a dirty room in which to sleep. There is no course

open to them but to spend such time as they have to themselves, in the evening, in wandering about the streets, there, little by little, yielding to the vices and temptations which assail them on every side.

What these boys, in the first place, need, is shelter during the hours of the evening, between the time when they leave off work and the hour when they are allowed to return home to sleep. Hitherto no shelter has been available to them, save in the form of a night school, band of hope, or other place of a similar character and object. Night schools are held in most Mission Halls and Ragged Schools twice a week. On the other four evenings, unless he can find, and cares to attend, other night schools or educational classes, or meetings of the same kind, the ragged boy must amuse himself as he best can in the streets. Moreover, at the age of from 10 to 15 a boy who is hard at work all day cannot be expected to do much study in his two hours of spare time.

Therefore the home, so called, being no home, so far as the boys' evenings are concerned, the streets being the worst playground which he can frequent, and it being out of the question for him to attend classes every evening, it remains to be seen what place of resort can be provided, to which the boy may always go when he wishes for shelter, warmth, amusement, and companionship in the evening. The need is met by the Ragged Institute, which is generally a large room in a Ragged School or in a Mission Hall building, open from eight to ten o'clock upon the four evenings in the week on which no night school is held for boys in the same building. This place is supplied with boys' games, and is controlled by some earnest Christian young man, who, in addition to the short service every evening at the close of the Institute, uses his influence with the boys to induce them to attend the Sunday School, Children's Services, Night School, Band of Hope, and other Classes held in the building. By these means the boys are brought to regard the Ragged School or the Mission Hall as a place which is always open to them for purposes of amusement, instruction, or religion.

The mistake which is generally made seems to lie in the fact that instruction, but not amusement, is provided for these boys, the result being that the very class whom it is sought to influence are seldom touched. The Ragged Institute seeks to attract, by amusements, those whom other operations have failed to reach.

Mode of Operation.

The method pursued is shortly as follows:—

It is a painful fact that in any part of London a sufficient number

of boys of the "ragged" type can be collected in a very few minutes to fill a good-sized room. There is no difficulty in getting the boys. A suitable room, if possible, in a Mission Hall, Ragged School, or other building devoted to Christian work, must be obtained. The expense will be greatly reduced if the room can be had rent free. When this has been done an earnest Christian young man of some experience in the management of rough lads must be found. He must have his heart in the work, and be of a genial disposition. It is also absolutely necessary that he should be one who will enforce the strictest discipline, and carry out his instructions to the letter. One pound a month is a sufficient salary for a manager.

When a room and a manager have been secured, and the day of opening has been determined, it is well to have notice of the opening given in the Sunday or Night School held in the same building; or or if there be none such, to go out in person on the opening night into the streets, and ask the first unkempt and dirty urchins one sees, if they would like to come and play some games. In this way about a dozen will be secured, and may be set to play at the various games. When they appear to be settled, one or two of the number should be sent out to bring in half a dozen more, and so on, until the requisite number are obtained. It is advisable at first to admit only half the number which the room is capable of holding, because, on commencing an institute of this kind, almost every boy has to be taught each game. After a week or a fortnight the boys will know how to play most of the games, and will then be able to teach new comers.

Where there are more than fifty boys, it is advisable to have an assistant to give out and receive back the games.

At half-past nine all the games are put away, and the boys seated for prayers. These last from fifteen to twenty minutes, and comprise a hymn, a short and simple statement of the Gospel, and a short prayer. Brevity and pith are the essentials of this service, the object being that no boy who comes in shall leave without hearing a plain statement of the Gospel, and of his own responsibility in accepting or rejecting it.

There is no reason why any boy should speak, laugh, or make any disturbance during prayers. These boys can keep quiet if they like. It has been found that the best way to secure perfect quiet and attention during prayers is to "suspend" for a week or longer term every boy who interrupts by noise or gesture. If this rule, severe though it may seem to be, is not rigidly enforced, it will be as well to omit the prayers altogether. On the evening when the first Institute was opened, it was necessary to turn out more than a third of the boys, under the above rule. Gradually they saw that it was intended to enforce the

rule, and now better order, more quiet, and greater attention will be found than in some of the Sunday and Ragged Schools in London. In this way habits of discipline and obedience are formed, and are carried by the boys into every department of their life. The unusual severity has not been resented by the boys, but, on the contrary, has materially conduced to the happiness of the evenings which they have spent in the Institute.

The Ragged Institute proper is intended only for boys of fifteen and under. Boys over that age, or too respectable for the Ragged Institute proper, should be removed into a "Penny Institute," which it is advisable, where possible, to hold in another part of the same building. In the last-mentioned Institute the boys pay a penny a week and receive a text-card, with their name upon the back, as a ticket of admission. There are very few boys, even in the Ragged Institute proper, who cannot give a penny a week. But, in consequence of the large amount of injudicious and gratuitous charity which prevails, these boys will do their utmost to avoid paying even a penny. They have been accustomed to have everything of this kind for nothing. One of the Penny Institutes stood empty for nearly a month, until the boys, finding that there was no intention of opening it for nothing, gave way themselves.

It is very advisable to give no teas, no money, or relief of any kind, in connection with these Institutes.

If a tea is given by any friend, it is made clear to the boys that it is not given as a part of the Institute work.

If a boy leaves before prayers, he is "suspended" for a week, otherwise the commencement of prayers would be the signal for most of the boys to go.

Notices of Meetings.

BARKING RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The claims of this deserving institution were lately ably advocated in the presence of a very respectable and well-attended meeting assembled in the Wesleyan Chapel. The school has been in existence some seven or eight years, the intention of the promoters being to bring "our low and wandering" population under the influence of religious teaching. Mr. Bewers presided. He remarked that it had been the custom of the committee for the past four or five years to hold an annual meeting, so that it might be known at least once a year

that some work was being done for the benefit of those for whom the institution was formed. To his mind one of the most pleasant features connected with that meeting was that the friends could all meet together as Christains from one standpoint. He was glad indeed to feel that they could all forget their various isms and different principles, and just from one aspect meet together as Christians engaged in the Master's work. The teachers of the school needed encouragement, and the present meeting was held for the purpose of enlisting in its behalf the sympathy and help of the friends who were not actively engaged in the work. Any one at all acquainted with Barking must feel that there was a great need in the town for work of that kind. They wanted personal help. He believed there was a large number in Barking who could if they would lend a helping hand, and he hoped many would be induced to come forward. There were two rooms engaged, which were always crowded, and there they needed more teachers.

Mr. Jackson, in submitting the report, said the school was started in 1871, and for about for four or five years they had only one place where the children were assembled on Sunday evening to receive religious instruction. Two years ago, as a result of a meeting held in the Wesleyan Chapel, the committee were encouraged to make a fresh effort, and so hired two other rooms, of which they had since continued the use. The income for the past year amounted to £15 14s. 8d., and the expenditure to £16 12s. 3d. The expenses in connection would have been a great deal more had it not been for the kindness of the teachers, who themselves fitted up a staircase and laid down a floor in order to make the room as comfortable as possible. He assured the friends there had not been a single item which could be regarded as an unnecessary expenditure; and for every pound that had been laid out £2 worth of work had been done. The staff comprised twenty-four teachers, seven of whom might be termed full-timers, the remainder officiating as they had opportunity. The number of children was 150. Recently a Night School had been established.

Mr. Soltau narrated some encouraging instances resulting from Ragged School work, and then gave some excellent advice as to what style of teaching is best calculated to secure the interest and attention of the children. Let the blackboard and chalk be resorted to not unfrequently, for there was a wonderful power in drawing. Object narrative lessons might also always be relied upon as sure to gain interest and attention. As an illustration: Some time ago the speaker gave an address on the lost piece of silver. All the articles mentioned in the record—the candle, the box of matches, the broom, and the silver coin—were brought into use in order to appeal to the eyes of the scholars, and he was quite sure that they never forgot it. Various other texts were mentioned capable of being similarly treated with, such as Sisera and the hammer and nails, &c., and if used to advantage the children would never be tired with hearing them; besides which they would be reminded of their lessons continually in the objects they saw around them, and would never forget what they were taught.

Mr. Curtis spoke of the report as

being the most unpretending one he had ever listened to. Its very modesty ought to commend it to the friends assembled, and ought certainly to enlist their sympathies in behalf of a work which had shown its vitality. He would like to see teachers gather their scholars around them and carry on their spiritual work in the same way that an earnest medical man would in regard to his own patients. What would be thought of a doctor who pursued his calling without ever expecting to witness any beneficial results? And if there was this feeling in regard to the treatment of the body, surely there should be something of the same feeling in connection with their spiritual work.

The Rev. J. Bowman and the Rev. W. Tompkins gave suitable addresses, and a collection was made on behalf of the funds of the school.

HAMILTON PLACE.

Old Scholars' Meeting.

One of these useful and interesting reunions was held at Hamilton Place on October 28th. Sixty young people, whose ages ranged from sixteen to twenty-five, responded to the kind invitation of the teachers. It was gratifying to learn that many of these had ranged themselves on the Lord's side, and that all were leading useful and honourable lives.

A good and abundant tea was provided, after which the meeting was varied by singing, by short addresses, and by intervals of conversation. Mr. Reekie presided. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Watson, Stewart, Wallis, Garner, Busten, Spong, Purday (secretary), Taylor, an old scholar, Tollett; also by Rev. N. Chandler and R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union.

YOUTHS' INSTITUTE, OLD PYE STREET, WESTMINSTER.

The fifth annual meeting of this useful Institute for working lads was held at the Westminster Working Men's Club, Old Pye Street, Victoria Street, Sir Robert W. Carden in the chair. Mr. and Mrs. Barker Harrison, the founders of the Institute, were supported by many friends.

The proceedings were commenced by the band playing as they marched to their seats in the front. The boys having given ample proof of their ability as instrumentalists, the opening hymn, "The Lord is King," was sung, and the Rev. James Consterdine offered up prayer. A chant by the singing class followed.

After the Rev. J. Consterdine had given kind Christian advice to the young men, Mr. Payne read the annual report, from which it appeared that good progress had been made, and that prizes were awarded to successful candidates by Mr. and Mrs. Barker Harrison. Each was credited with having done his best, and merit and perseverance were alike rewarded. The subjects rewarded were Scripture texts (on the word "Heaven," several lads having written out very carefully above five hundred verses), the Bible class, Bible clocks, writing from dictation, illuminated texts, spelling, geometrical designs and freehand drawing, arithmetic, singing class, chess, drum and fife band, also swimming and athletic sports. The annual cost of the Institute was a little over £100, the members' subscriptions, of 4d. a month, amounting to nearly £12.

The Chairman then presented the prizes, consisting of books and money, to a great number of recipients, in each case accompanying

the presentation with a few encouraging and pleasant remarks. He advised the boys to invest their half-crown rewards in a bank, but to be particular which one at the present time.

The two chief prize-takers were Harry J. Hills and Charles W. Willis. A youth named J. Mallows took the first of the swimming prizes, kindly given by the Chairman; and Mrs. Barker Harrison explained that the recipient of this reward was also the champion swimmer and winner of her silver medal, which would not, however, become his absolute property unless he won it a second time.

The Chairman said they had also to thank Mr. Geary, manager of the Institute, for his unremitting attention to the welfare and comfort of the numerous lads under his care. As a memento of the occasion, he had much pleasure in presenting him with a handsome book.

Mrs. Barker Harrison here handed to Sir Robert Carden a very ingenious straight-line drawing and puzzle sheet, done by boys in the Institute, as a presentation on their behalf.

The Chairman said he was very much obliged for such an unexpected present, which he should value more than if it were made of solid gold. Sir Robert referred to his morning's work when he sat in the Justice-room of the Guildhall dealing with bad people, but it was a great deal more pleasant to him that night to give rewards of merit. He regarded the swimming prizes as of great importance, and he had already given his two soverings for the same rewards next year. They must all feel how desirable it was to learn an art which might save human life, and he urged them to learn swimming as well as the many other subjects which their kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, enabled them to acquire.

The Rev. Dr. Paterson said he felt great pleasure in being before Sir Robert Carden, but he did not think that everybody who came before him could speak of it as a pleasure. An old adage told them that magistrates were a terror to them that do evil, but he hoped they had no cause to fear Sir Robert on that account. He heartily sympathised with Sir Robert in the expression that it was much more pleasant to reward those who did their duty than to sentence evil-doers to punishment. He felt greatly interested in all that was done at the Institute, and particularly in that part of the instruction which enabled them to save life and to be useful to others. The power to save others had its own reward, and when they exercised it they felt that they were in fellowship with Him who gave His life as a ransom for many. The salvation of men was by faith in Jesus. This faith enabled them to give helpful words to others, which was as really saving life as plunging into the Thames and bringing a drowning fellow-being safely to the bank. They might never have the opportunity of saving life from drowning, but they would have constant opportunities of rescuing perishing souls from the depths of sin by directing them to the Saviour. He had sympathy with all their sports and enjoyments; the Gospel did not stand in the way of one of them; but they must remember that nothing sinful was pleasant. People might think it pleasant at the time, but it was always intensely painful in the end.

Mr. Rea, Major Cooper-Gardiner, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Kennedy also spoke on this occasion.